



Spot Report: Compounders, Inc. Update #1

HOWELL, NJ, NRC#1360151

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report Date: 2/15/2023

Last edited 2/16/2023 5:56 PM UTC

Overview: On February 9, 2023, Howell Township Fire Departments were dispatched to 15 Marl Road to perform a smoke investigation after calls reporting smoke in the area. Upon arriving, it was reported that the Fire Departments discovered ongoing burning of materials inside of an old still in which a door had been cut. Firefighters were able to extinguish the fire. Upon seeing the condition of the site, firefighters called for Howell Township Office of Emergency Response (HTOER). Upon seeing the numerous drums and smelling a chemical odor, HTOER requested Monmouth County Department of Health (MCDOH) for a potential hazardous materials response. Upon arrival, MCDOH began an investigation of the area. MCDOH and HTOER discovered large quantities of 55-gallon drums, along with smaller quantities of various other containers around the site. MCDOH and HTOER noted many spills along the ground, open drums, and drums present in the old still on site. In addition to the drums inside the still, there appeared to be evidence of solid waste and wooden pallets, showing evidence of burning. MCDOH then requested the presence of NJDEP Bureau of Emergency Response (DEPBER) who responded to the site.

The site appears to be the former location of Compounders Inc. It is estimated from reports from HTOER that the facility at one point manufactured a number of chemical compounds, most likely for use in glues and adhesives. It appears at some point, the company moved on to manufacturing asphalts that were loaded into trucks for use.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions and Roles: NJDEP began assessing the situation; Howell Township Fire Departments had left the scene at this time. A chemical odor was immediately noted upon entering the scene. The site investigation involved a walk around of the entire site and a rough inventory of materials.

There were numerous drums on site at this location. A rough count estimates the total

number of drums on site at approximately two hundred (200) to three hundred (300) 55-gallon drums on location. The overwhelming majority of drums in this area appear to be in poor condition and show evidence of bulging, rusting, denting, or leaking. Spills are noted on the ground in this area and under the pallets. In addition, it appears some areas have possibly had fresh soil recently placed.

Prior to the completion of the site inspection officials from HTOER pulled all active permits for the site and ordered personnel to cease all activity.

DEPER indicated they would be referring the case to Criminal Justice, DEPHW, and NJDEP Bureau of Air Compliance and Enforcement.

On February 13, 2023, a meeting was held to discuss the site. The meeting involved members from DEPHW, DEPER, MCDOH, HTOEM, and Howell Township Fire Department.

On February 14, 2023, MCDOH and HTOEM performed another site inspection.

On February 15, 2023, an additional site visit was conducted between DEPHW, DEPER, MCDOH, HTOEM, and Howell Township Fire Bureau. The site inspection consisted of a review of onsite SDS sheets and products profiles and an additional walk around of the facility.

EPA Actions and Roles: On February 15, 2023, EPA received a request for assistance from NJDEP. EPA dispatched an OSC, and he arrived on-scene at 1:45 PM. EPA OSC met with representatives from DEPHW, DEPER, MCDOH, HTOEM, Howell Township Land Use Officer, the Mayor of the Borough of Farmingdale, and the the Howell Township Manage. It was confirmed that the property is not secured. There are breaches in the front fence of the property and no fence on either side of the property. There are multiple areas with haphazardly stacked metal 55-gallon drums in various stages of decay. There are various containers that are leaking. Labels that were legible indicated hazardous materials are within the containers or were in the containers. There were containers that appeared to be crushed. According to local and state responders, the crushed containers were rejected from a recycling truck. There were also containers that appeared to be cardboard that were leaking solid material labeled "toxic". State and local responders indicated that some of the containers were relocated by the current property representative from a laboratory inside the building to an outside location. A rusty operational still structure with an opening cut out was identified with containers located inside. This is the location where the recent fire was discovered. Handheld monitors did not detect any elevated levels at the time of the visit, however, there were chemical odors encountered throughout the assessment. EPA OSC was able to meet the property representative in-person at the facility location. EPA relayed the need of immediate facility security, the identification of all hazardous material, proper packaging of hazardous material, safe interim storage of materials, and the proper disposal of the materials. EPA OSC requested attorney information from the property representative. State and local responders are sharing reports and collected information with EPA regarding this property. Howell Township OEM Coordinator will continue to work with local and state police officers to patrol the facility until the property can be properly secured.

Media Interest: None

Media Links:

Note: The next report will be issued on 02/16/2023 at 17:00

The EPA will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed

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